

APPENDIX

The following is a copy of the Pre-Convention Discussion Bulletin #2 of the Progressive Labor Movement¹ referred to on p. 965.

THE BLACK LIBERATION STRUGGLE AND THE RIGHT TO REVOLUTION

Minutes of the October, 1964 meeting of the National CO-ordinating Committee of the Progressive Labor Movement

PRE-CONVENTION DISCUSSION BULLETIN # 2

BILL EPTON:

Since the formation of PL there has been some criticism from various quarters that we have failed to come to grips with the Negro question, and that we have failed to come up with a definite statement on it. Part of this criticism is justified, because in other areas of our work we have devoted a little more time, and the questions weren't as complicated. We haven't fought for a meeting on the Negro question in general. We should fight for a line even if we can only put out segments of a line. The next major document we put out should be on the Negro question. The criticism that we have failed to come to grips with the Negro question is not accurate because in our publications . . . many of us have attempted to deal with one or another aspect of this question.

The main features of the Negro question that we must deal with are 1) the role of nationalism, which is a very strong current among the Negro people. It manifests itself in many ways. 2) Whether the Negro people constitute a nation or not, or what do we mean by self-determination. Does it have to mean nationhood, or can it mean some form of autonomy? Of course self-determination means just that, that the Negro people will determine themselves what they want to be. As communists we must have an outline of what we mean by self-determination, and what our line would be on this question. Being a vanguard means not leaving things to chance and to hoping that the Negro people will choose the correct path. 3) We must also deal with the question of land, because I don't think the Negro people will take up a real revolutionary stand unless the question of land is prominent. 4) The role of the black bourgeoisie must be thoroughly analyzed and evaluated. 5) What reform demands can we present to bring the people into struggle against the ruling class? How do we develop these reformist demands into revolutionary struggle? 6) There is a lot of discussion in our community around what the Negro people actually call themselves and what do they want to be called.

I think the report that I presented is weak in the sense that on many of these questions I did not go into detail. I don't think that the main substance of the Negro question has drastically changed since the party developed the line on self-determination, and the right to nationhood. This report attempted to take out the essentials of Harry Haywood's line . . . and to sort of bring it up to date.

The six points:

1) The question of nationalism—There is almost no organized expression of nationalism in the Negro community. Most of the nationalist organizations in Harlem have been discredited and command no following . . . but there is a very strong nationalist current that runs through the Negro community, and a strong sentiment along these lines. This is a healthy, progressive and revolutionary form of nationalism. I think that what is needed is a progressive, honest (and I use this word "honest" quite correctly, because the people in our com-

¹ The committee's copy of this bulletin was too poor to photostat. The many misspellings and errors are as they appear in the original document.

munity are used to seeing corrupt nationalist organizations) and militant organizations that could raise the questions of joining the struggle with the African, Asian and Latin Americans. I propose that we work towards seeing that such a formation takes place, with a maximum amount of independence from PL.

2) Nationhood, autonomy, and the right of self-determination. This right—is as valid now as 35 years ago, regardless as to whether we have all the five prerequisites as outlined by Stalin . . . When we talk of a nation or autonomous republic, we are of course talking about a specific area. That area could be the black belt. I think the concept of an autonomous republic will relieve us of many of the theoretical discussions, and the arguments that we would get involved in by advancing the slogan of the Negro nation. The concept of nationhood does not appeal to the people as being a home-grown Marxist-Leninist concept.

3) Land . . . I don't think that the Negro people will wage a truly revolutionary struggle for integration, or desegregation, or anything like that. I think that if they could see the end result of their struggle as having land of their own, then they would more readily take the revolutionary path to their liberation.

4) The black bourgeoisie. At times their role has been progressive and at other times reactionary. Their role is less conspicuous today and I think less important, because there seems to be a rejection of them by the mass of the Negro people.

5) Reform demands. The possibility of winning partial victories around these struggles is there, but to create a mass base or a mass following is not too great. This applies not only to PL but other organizations. At the height of the rent strike season there were actually very few buildings on rent strikes. From our experiences these struggles could not be sustained for a long period of time. We should go into these struggles with a view to recruiting the more militant forces, and attempting to politicalize as many of them as possible.

6) Name—Among the more militant people, the word Negro does not have any meaning and they thoroughly reject it. There seems to be a preference for Afro-American, African-American, or black. . . . The people seem to generally prefer the word black. I would like to raise the question of Negro-white unity. The Negro people reject the whole concept of Negro-white unity as it was advanced by the CPUSA, and as it is being advanced by the reformist organizations. The general line that Negroes and whites will work together in integrated organizations for Negro liberation. I see the concept of developing a black revolutionary movement or organization that will have almost complete autonomy from the white revolutionary organization. Even though there will be blacks within the white revolutionary movement, I don't think that the mass of the Negro people will follow or be a part of that type of organization. I think that what is happening in the south and among the back people today in this new upsurge revolutionary struggle is a feeling, maybe latent, or an emerging nation or of an emerging people, along the lines of what's happening in Africa and Asia. Finally . . . I think that the revolution will take place in this country with the mass of the Negro people in the Democratic party. I don't know if in other revolutionary situations the mass of the people remained in the main bourgeois party. We should sort of re-think this too. Where are we going to operate: within an independent party, or within the mass party of the people, which the Democratic Party seems to be.

BILL McADOO:

I take strong issue with Bill Epton's report as it was written a year and a half ago and with a number of the comments made here today because I do not think it is founded upon a solid base of Marxist-Leninist analysis. There was no significant analysis of what nationalism is. What is it? What kind of historical phenomenon is it? What is its dialectical development? There was mention of the black petty bourgeoisie (there is no black bourgeoisie, only a petty bourgeoisie). There was no mention of the fact that black nationalism is a black petty bourgeois trend and that nationalism is always, everywhere a bourgeois trend, and this analysis is basic to Marxism. There is no mention of the relationship of forces in the black community, of which black nationalism is only one of at least five distinct political trends, of which Negro bourgeois reformism is only one of five or six trends, of which there are at least three or four other trends. What Mao did for Chinese society was to seek to discover the economic base of relation that motivated the various elements. A very careful analysis. And why? Because Mao had a revolution in mind and in order to succeed in a proletarian revolution one has to know who one's friends are who one's enemies are, and you have to have some predictive potential. You have to know what they are going to do when

the deal goes down, who are they going to side with. How can you appeal to each section and what form of organization would incorporate each section. Now we have failed to do this. As much credit as you can give Heywood for being the first black American Marxist to attempt to apply Marxism-Leninism to the Negro question in U.S.A., I think that this error is carried over from Heywood because the most he says about the black petty bourgeoisie is to say that it has a split social psychology. In other words we have to sink into non-descript sociological jargon in order not to admit a failing.

We have failed to find out what role Jesse Grey, Malcolm X and Elijah Muhammad plays in the Negro community. Are they reactionary nationalists, are they Negro bourgeois reformists, are they what I call classical Uncle Toms, are they one of five or six political trends? If so, what are their economic base of relations? But we have not gone into that . . . but they do have separate economic bases of relations. I think also we miss a great point when we speak of self-determination. Because we accept self-determination not as a dialectical process, as a thing constantly going into being out of being, as a nation is something always coming into being or going out of being according to Stalin, (and he is correct). Instead of speaking of self-determination as a process, a process of struggle, and conceiving of it as something that may even begin before a socialist revolution takes place, we think about some time in the future, and say, well you know, when it is all done we are going to have self-determination. But I say it is not so, that self-determination has a definition which brings it within the framework of capitalism. That does not mean that black liberation is going to be achieved within the framework of capitalism or that self-determination will be finished within capitalism. I think of it this way. When the Negro people as a people begin to engage in revolutionary struggle for black liberation they have also begun at the same time to fight for self-determination and they are exercising one part of self-determination and it has a direction. It's very comforting and nice to think that after the socialist revolution . . . all these problems are going to be solved, that the Negro people are going to have self-determination and get a little piece of land. If it isn't worked out as a process there isn't going to be any such thing as self-determination.

For American Marxists the work that has to be done in discerning the relationship of forces in the Negro community represents a frontier in communist struggle here . . . What is nationalism? It is a bourgeois trend and is there just one kind of nationalism? No, there are at least two kinds of nationalism. There is reactionary nationalism and there is what I call neo-black nationalism. And what is the basis for reactionary black nationalism? The Negro people before 1921 was predominantly an agrarian community and predominantly residing in the south. There is the Booker T. Washington trend of thought. This is what I call classical Uncle Tomism and there is a very good reason for it. He represented a class of Negroes who, in return for a closed market for their real estate, little banks, little grocery stores helped to maintain the subjugation of the Negro people in the South in an agrarian community. They were useful. They were blatant Uncle Toms. But there was no reform expression for these Negroes to participate in. In other words they were used in the same way as some of them in the South today and they urge people not to participate in demonstrations.

Now what did they get in return? A closed market on their insurance, on their funeral parlors, on their little stores. There is plenty of documentation to show this as a trend particularly in an agrarian situation. Now what happens when the closed market is violated. It is violated in an urban situation, like New York. When the Met. Life Insurance Company sends a Negro salesman into Harlem and he opens up this Uncle Tom's closed market. Two forces are produced. The economic basis for the two other trends are evidenced. One is reactionary Negro bourgeois nationalism. As a result of the classical Uncle Tom's market being opened he responds by asserting that only the black man has the right to exploit the black man, and he has the exclusive right to exploit the black man. Malcolm X, Muhammed Elijah—black capitalist designs, and instead of Jesus this time they lead him to a black Jesus. And one dialectically develops out of the other and if you don't believe me find out who Lawson represents; the Negro wine sellers association, the Negro realtors association, the small Negro banks, that is who Lawson represents.

What is reactionary Negro bourgeois nationalism. It is declassed Negro bourgeois Uncle Tomism. They have been declassed. Their closed market has been violated. But who violated it? The Metropolitan Life Insurance Company

hired a Negro—put the Negro businessman out of business. This Negro hired in Harlem represents now the economic base of relations for Negro bourgeois reformism. There is also neo-black nationalism. It is new, because a lot of its emphasis comes from the nations in Africa that have now achieved liberation. It is more an external influence on the Negro community here than an internal influence. It has positive features. It is possible to discern at least six bourgeois trends (all of these are bourgeois trends, I haven't gotten to proletarian trends yet) and use them as a basis for working out a program in the Negro community, where everybody stands, predicting what interests they represent to see what struggles they will engage in and will not engage in and will not engage in in a united way.

ALICE JEROME:

There is very little said about Negroes in the trade union movement. If this is going to be a concentration of ours in the coming period I think this has to be dealt with more. Perhaps either one of the Bills would want to discuss it.

BILL EPTON:

There is a brief section of the report on the Negro in the trade union movement. It is only an opening gun on it.

MORT SCHEER:

There is a tremendous gap in the development of Marxists-Leninists on the question of Negro liberation. This reflects the failure of Marxists-Leninists in the United States for a long period of time. This is going to require more serious study and experience.

We have to reject what is being put forward by pseudo Marxists-Leninists as a strategy . . . There are four lines . . . that have to be rejected by us:

1) This line (reflects the Communist Party and Randolph and others) that the struggle is essentially a struggle to complete the bourgeois democratic revolution. In essence it says that the bourgeoisie can still play a progressive role in this society, and neglects the fact that the bourgeoisie has reached the stage of an imperialist bourgeoisie and imperialism is reactionary all along the line.

2) Another line put forward in Haywood's unpublished manuscript, that the main contradiction is between the Negro people and the Dixiecrats, and that there is a fundamental contradiction between the Southern oligarchy and the ruling class. That the main task is to direct the struggle against the Dixiecrats—split the Dixiecrats from the ruling class—that this will lead to a form of black liberation, although not complete. I think this is a false thesis. The main enemy is the ruling class. The Dixiecrats are servants of the ruling class. This line leads to wrong practical policies—such as that federal troops should occupy the south. It leads in effect to the same conclusion as the first—a reliance on the ruling class to grant, under pressure some form of liberation.

3) That the Negro people can achieve liberation under capitalism. This has been put forward by Hammer and Steel. It says that we are underestimating—we are failing to slight the enemy strategically in the sense that we're overestimating imperialism to think that the Negro people cannot achieve liberation under capitalism. That imperialism is so wrought with contradictions that it's possible to force them to grant self-determination, even before the overthrow of the ruling class.

4) That the Negro people alone can achieve liberation. This thesis is put forward by the Trotskyists. It is also incorrect.

The history of capitalism in the U.S. is organically connected with the oppression of the Negro people. The principle source of primitive capital accumulation came from slavery and the slave trade. Secondly, when capitalism developed to imperialism in the U.S., a principal source for the sustenance of imperialism in the United States was and is the oppression of the Negro people. The amount of surplus value or profits that they've expropriated since the Second World War is something like 100 billion, from the exploitation of the Negro people. If we compare it with what they take out of Latin America and other areas and when we think of what they're doing to save their base of oppression, they're not going to voluntarily surrender their base of oppression in the U.S. This estimate is based on something like \$16 billion a year wage differentials, higher prices charged in the Negro communities and things like that. It's probably more than \$20 billion a year in wages alone.

Our starting point is that the main enemy is the imperialist ruling class. Just as imperialism oppresses other colonial peoples in Asia, Africa and Latin America, there is a base and a superstructure of oppression in the United States. The ruling class, under pressure, will grant certain types of concessions partic-

ularly in the superstructure, but will never voluntarily surrender their economic base of oppression nor their political power. Those are the two main things that the ruling class will cling to.

The shift that has taken place in the status of the Negro people from a predominantly agriculturally oppressed people to a predominantly working class oppressed people is of tremendous significance. It accounts in part for the increased exploitation of the Negro people, and it accounts in part for the new stage in the revolutionary process of the liberation movement—the urbanization and the working class development of the Negro people. The historic source of the oppression is the South. The south was, and is a semi-colonial area, in effect. The heart of the oppression is the Negro people, but also the entire area, including the whites, have been affected by this status of being a semi-colonial area—somewhat different from the North. That's why I don't agree with Truman Nelson's position that the Negro people throughout the whole of the U.S. constitute the nation.

BILL MCADDO:

Stalin said nothing about the heart of oppression being one of the five qualifications for a nation.

MORT SCHEER:

No, but I think that the heart of it flows out of the fact that the essential base of the nation of the Negro people is in the south. Oppression doesn't have anything to do with it, but I think that historically the way the system evolved was in the south and spread throughout the whole country. So I think there cannot be a revolution of the Negro people without a revolution to overthrow the ruling class and in particular a program of revolution for the South.

Fourthly, I think that the question of the relationship of the struggle for liberation and the struggle for socialism has to be very much explored by us. In my opinion there are two revolutionary currents in the United States, uneven in development at this stage. One is the proletarian revolution and the other is the liberation revolution. A Marxist-Leninist vanguard has to have an overall strategy for the destruction of imperialism which is the source of oppression. That overall strategy can only lead to the conclusion that the main force for the destruction of the imperialist system is the working class. That does not exclude the Negro people because the Negro people are a decisive sector of the working class and in my judgment will be the leading sector. But nevertheless I can't envision imperialism being destroyed in this country without the working class as a class destroying the imperialist system. So the main force for revolution is the working class and the main force for liberation is the working class sector of the liberation movement, the Negro workers, and the strategy and tactics have to be based on that. I think there has to be the development of mass black revolutionary organizations, not a single all embracing black revolutionary organization. There will be many forms including self-defense units, Negro workers organizations, farm workers organizations, political councils, black councils, housing councils—in other words there will be many forms of organization. There will emerge a national liberation front of all of these organizations and through the development of revolutionaries in this movement black Marxist-Leninists will lead this revolution. We should not have the perspective of a white revolutionary party and a black revolutionary party. That would be a mistake. A vanguard party should be based on internationalism and based on the working class and I don't think we should project a black revolutionary party as a vanguard and a white revolutionary party as a vanguard. I think we should project a working class party, black and white. Everyone connected with the revolution to be in the vanguard. However, this does not mean no black revolutionary movement or black revolutionary organizations. This would be another mistake.

Secondly, I think there has to be developed a black revolutionary press, a liberation press. There is no such press on the scene at this point. And it should be national, north and south.—not just for the south as Freedom was projected. A press that will strive to build the various black revolutionary organizations as well as the national liberation front and a press that can become an organ for the liberation movement. There are two aspects to the question of self-determination that Bill McAdoo just spoke about. One is that it is a process that goes on now and has been going on in the sense that the strategy and tactics will be determined by the Negro people themselves. But I think that self-determination means a very specific thing also and not just a process . . . the right to secede from the dominant nation and set up the oppressed nation's national state with its own territory. Revolution is a process but we shouldn't confuse the process

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with the actual revolution, the culmination of the process. What has taken place in the radical movement over a period of time has been a wiping off of the revolutionary potential of white workers. There has been concentration among students and in the black community but there is a big gap in work among white workers and working class youth. This is wrong. It is fundamentally opportunistic, in the sense that the revolutionary potential is highest at this stage of the revolution among Negro people and Puerto Rican people and among idealistic students, but there has to be a concentration developed by white revolutionaries in the white communities and in certain shops. The only way of building Negro-white unity is through that kind of work; it is not possible on any other kind of basis. Through struggle unity will emerge rather than through any superficial approaches. The way we are going to build a base among white workers is not going to be on the basis of the oppression of the black people but on the basis of the immediate issues confronting the white workers, the class issues. Through mobilizing strength along these lines will emerge a unity with the black workers and the black community. I think this has been widely neglected.

In effect we are not combatting the widespread white supremacy that exists—the position has been attacked that to raise the question that the working class is going to be the main force to destroy the imperialist means to hold back the black revolution under false cries of Negro-white unity. There is a correct aspect to that and also an incorrect aspect to that. If we have the line to hold back the black revolutionary movement because the working class revolutionary movement is relatively backward at this time—that would be a mistake. What is required is a shifting of work on the part of white revolutionaries to raise the level of revolutionary consciousness among white workers.

BILL EPTON:

I don't propose that there be a white Marxist party and a black Marxist party. What I suggested was that there develop a black nationalist type of organization, to pull together this latent feeling in the black community and give it its own direction.

MCADOO:

I think that the concepts brought out by Morty are not too different from the concepts brought out by the old party on Negro-white unity. Now Bill Epton has said that the Negro community has rejected this type of concept of Negro-white unity. I reject it outright and for sound revolutionary reasons. One is that I do not conceive of the Negro people in the black belt as a nation, I conceive of the Negro people as a nation whether they be in the black belt, the south side of Chicago, Harlem or anywhere else. Why do we limit the nation to the black belt? One reason is because imperialism walks naked there, whereas they took down the signs in Harlem. Well, according to Stalin that has nothing to do with the definition of a nation. The nation (according to Stalin) is a historical category, something that is coming into being and going out of being, and he defines it very explicitly, and it happens historically that some nations are oppressed and others are not, they have formed a state.

One of the main things for defining nation as a black belt, is Stalin's proposition that there must be a common territory. Look at the reasoning here. Stalin said there must be a common territory after he explained why—what utility this common territory has. Because there is a greater interaction among the people, because they're together more, certain other features that define a nation, are more apt to occur, and be sustained, and be stable in order to make a stable community. If one has a concept that only the Negro people in the black belt form a nation what are we to say of the white people in New York and the white people of California, what common territory do they share? But they are part of one nation. But when we think of Harlem where half a million people live, and the South side of Chicago and the black bottom of Detroit, we don't think of it in the same way. We don't think that these areas of black concentration form a part of one black nation consisting of 20 million black people in the United States. I think there's an artificial application of Marxism-Leninism here. Not finding out why Stalin suggested this, but only taking it and applying it artificially. I say that the Negro people in the United States comprise a nation if the only qualification were common territory. I think that we are making statements about whether we should have a black revolutionary Marxist-Leninist party and a white revolutionary Marxist-Leninist party and are dismissing the concept of a black revolutionary party because we see this as a reflection of reactionary black nationalism, which it is not. I think I can advance a good case for a black revolutionary party with fraternal relations with a white

revolutionary party, the type of relations that are supposed to exist between nations under socialism, and I don't think that this concept will violate Marxism-Leninism in any way whatsoever. If you conceive of the Negro as a nation this conclusion is almost automatic. I believe it will evolve, that it must exist and that is the only way you are really going to achieve Negro-white unity. Another concept—in a party we have democratic centralism. If we have democratic centralism in a united party then the self-determination of the Negro people is going to be violated because they are going to fall under the will of the majority. Now face it, a white majority.

MORT SCHEER:

Do you conceive of two separate revolutionary strategies for the destruction of the ruling class.

MCADOO:

Because the Negro people live in a particular and special kind of circumstance there will be aspects of strategy which will be particular and not general. But there are aspects of strategy which, because we all live under imperialism, will be general. Suppose instead of the reformists who command the movement in the south we commanded it and suppose we had in mind not a patchwork reform but a fundamental reform, well what kind of reform would we join in fraternally? The kind of reform on the agrarian question that we would join in fraternally is the struggle for the complete and absolute abolition of sharecropping as a cruel and inhuman form of production, much the same as slavery. And who would this benefit? Just black people? It benefits white people as well. I'd say that to dismiss the concept of the black people having a revolutionary left party, a Marxist-Leninist party, independent, in a fraternal sense, from a white revolutionary party in the United States, may be to carry over a mistake which prevented the development of a significant left force within the black community.

MORT SCHEER:

What about the Mexican-Americans, the Indians and the Puerto Rican people? What party would they join?

MCADOO:

The Puerto Rican people are not a nation here. I think it depends upon your estimate of what the character of these different minority groups are, just as much as what considerations you have as to whether there should be two revolutionary parties in the U.S. depends a great deal on your estimate of the Negro people.

Another point—To most people imperialism seems synonymous with capitalism—forgetting that it's the highest stage of capitalism. When did it evolve: at the turn of the century. . . . Now what happened in 1865? The Negro people in the course of the Civil War were transformed from a condition of slavery under a ruling union of Southern slaveholders and northern bourgeoisie—who both benefited. They were transferred to what I call black captivity under imperialism—. Certain things began after slavery ended. Up to day we can say that $\frac{3}{4}$ of the Negro people at least, live in urban communities and are probably proletarian. Before the turn of the century $\frac{3}{4}$ at least—probably 90%—were agrarian. What did imperialism mean in terms of the Negro people. Their conditions reached a new stage. What role does the black play? Is it just another ghetto, like the Jewish people's ghetto on the lower east side, or the Polish people in Hamtramck, Michigan? Or is it a special mechanism, as regards black captivity . . . Regardless of whether you regard the Negro people as a nation, there will be a struggle for black liberation.

WALLY LINDER:

If workers struggling against the plant manager, like the auto workers, become revolutionary and are ready to join a revolutionary party, then it seems to me that by directing them into separate Marxist-Leninist parties you are splitting a struggle they have developed against a section of the ruling class that is exploiting black and white workers; that to me seems illogical.

SELMA SPARKS:

That statement is based on an incorrect assumption, that there is black-white worker unity today. The point is that before this unity can emerge you need two separate parties. Workers today struggle against one another because they don't recognize the common enemy. Something else has to create unity

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and I don't see any other way to do it except to have two separate groups working among their own people to raise the consciousness of these people.

BILL MCADOO:

I don't see where my concept (helps divide the workers in the union). Presumably in that union there are going to be black Marxists and white Marxists working together based on a sound revolutionary program and on a basis of fraternal unity and equal relations. I was talking about a party and not a labor union.

WALLY LINDER:

I wasn't talking about a union, I was talking about developing revolutionaries in the working class and revolutionary work among the workers, not just the question of TU demands.

MILF ROSEN:

The meeting is getting interesting. We will have to have some decorum. Stalin and Lenin conceived of one revolutionary party to embrace all the national groups in Russia. In Cuba you had a black and white revolution. The point I think is more important is that you raise a new concept of nationhood embracing all the ghettos, together with all the Negro population in the South. I don't think the basic thing in achieving it (revolution) is whether you have one party or two parties. More fundamental than that—because you would say that we would all work together for a universal revolutionary program within which there would be different particulars. I would like to hear how this is going to be accomplished and what would be some of the strategy and tactics.

FRED JEROME:

The discussion is much too abstract, cut-off from practical application. This question is raised only in relation to two parties. Before you get to two parties there is a whole question of two nations, the whole question of what goes into two nations, and so on. We are talking up in the air. If you have a nation bounded by the color of its skin, as Harold Cruse wrote in *Studies on the Left*, then have you got two nations sharing a territory, practically speaking? What does that mean? Who do I vote for? Where do I pay my taxes? What about the guy on 110th St.? Is this a practical question or just an ideological one? This has to be established first before you get into a hassal on two parties.

UNA MULZAC:

I agree with Fred—it's very difficult to see this with any clarity, because where does it (the nation) begin, and where does it end, if you're going to have two separate one (nation) that involve the entire country? There must be some boundaries—some basis for definition. Where everyone is in the same nation and not in the same nation—I can't visualize any such thing being projected in any scientific manner. The people who projected the idea of partition in British Guiana were very specific about where the black people would live and where the Indian people would live, but I can't see this nationhood question being looked upon in any kind of way that would clarify it to anyone else, unless you spent a lot of time in trying to do this—in creating boundaries or not creating boundaries, whether or not it would have boundaries or wouldn't have boundaries would be a very important question. If it's just an ideological thing, you'd be bringing in an ideological question which would just say that because there is a population of about 22 million people who are faced with certain historical developments evolving their cultural, economic and political life in the U.S.—if you want to say that because of this there is a nation, I don't think that would be valid either—even ideologically. You leave out the fact that this nation takes in the entire area of the United States, just like the white nation takes in the entire area of the U.S. I feel that there would have to be much more scientific basis for a projection of this thought of the Negro people as a nation in the United States.

BILL MCADOO:

People are confusing the concept of the nation with the concept of the state. A nation may never become a state. The concept of partition has nothing to do with the concept of nationhood. Hard and fast lines of boundaries and separations have nothing to do with nationhood. People take this mention of two separate revolutionary parties so literally and so extremely, that immediately it implies the suggestion of two real separate entities. I wasn't talking about a state,

or boundaries—the boundaries exist right now. We want to eliminate those boundaries. I don't understand this talk of boundaries and territories.

ALICE JEROME:

I think a great deal of the confusion of the Negro people in this country (are they a nation? what kind of nation?) arises because their position in the country is not a clear cut position. There is an objective basis for this confusion. The part of the position which we will agree upon is that the Negro people historically and by virtue of a special kind of colonial type oppression, has constituted a nation within a nation. This colonial type oppression exists throughout the country, not only in the South, but wherever there are Negro people trying to live under capitalism today, and this is a cornerstone of the capitalist system. I don't think you could have a capitalist system in U.S., without one foot firmly based on the exploitation of the Negro people, as super-exploitation, as a colonial or semi-colonial people. But it's not a clear cut thing, and I don't think it answers Stalin's definition exactly, and I don't think that's particularly important. It is a special case. I think there are certain things we could agree on—but I don't think this means that there isn't the need for further exploration of the question. I'll try to state them (the things we agree upon). 1) The Negro people throughout the country constitute a nation, and have a right to self-determination, when and where their liberation process (and I agree that the liberation process is in itself a self-determination process) makes this possible. The boundaries, if there are boundaries would be determined at that time, but the right seems to me clear-cut. The right is part of the process which they (the Negro people) are enacting at this time. 2) Full liberation will not come under capitalism, it will require a revolution to a socialist economy, because the Negro is the cornerstone of U.S. imperialist oppression. 3) This liberation will be achieved by the working class, through the fraternal unity of a black liberation front, and the organized working class, and other allies.

I see the black liberation front as a separate entity, not exactly a separate party. I would see a party that would at least unite some people who are in all of these and in the organized working class; there might be a Puerto Rican liberation front, a Mexican-American liberation front, but they would unite as allies for the destruction of capitalism. 4) The Negro people would work in all aspects of the black liberation front in alliance with the revolutionary working class party. I think maybe it should be called a black revolutionary liberation front.

LARRY PHELPS:

My understanding of a nation comes from what is historically meant by a nation—it has some kind of territory, some kind of unified economy, some kind of social characteristics. If you aren't using those kinds of criteria, I wish you wouldn't use the term nation, but use something else. In Mort's discussion, I have some questions—In what way do you define a semi-colony? Bill McAdoo, you talked about transformation—how is that related to nationhood. All sides seem to think that either before or after the revolution there will be some kind of nation created. I don't agree with that. What is crucial is the kind of agitation you will carry on in connection with this. Also, how will this mass black revolutionary organization work?

FRED JEROME:

The concept of two separate parties presupposes the existence or coming into existence of two separate states. That sense is where the confusion between the two concepts of state and nation arose, unless you can explain the need for two separate fraternal parties without the need for two separate states, or movements toward two separate states.

MORT SCHEER:

One of the words that's confusing us is "revolution"—because there all all kinds of revolutions and revolutionaries. The bourgeois revolution and the proletarian revolution aren't the same kinds of revolution. Essentially, the anti-imperialist, national liberation revolutions are not proletarian revolutions. Essentially they are national revolutions and not a working class revolution as such. Therefore an anti-imperialist or national liberation movement you can have a party or a united front, or a national front, that expresses the national liberation revolution. However, within the national liberation movement there are classes, and the working class sector does not have the same line as the bourgeois sector, even though the bourgeois sector could be revolutionary. When we

speaking of a Marxist-Leninist party or strategy, we are speaking about a working class strategy for national liberation and a working class strategy for socialist revolution, and our understanding is that the national liberation revolution cannot be consummated unless it develops into a socialist revolution, as it did in Cuba. Particularly in the United States, I don't think it can be consummated, unless there's a socialist revolution. Therefore, the party of the working class fighting with the outlook of establishing a working class state and socialism, should be a party of the entire working class, and not fragmented, because the logic of that (establishing a party on national considerations) would mean establishing a black party as well as a white party, a Puerto Rican party as well as a Mexican-American party. I would be opposed to that. I think however, that the national liberation movement will have organizations—even parties and many forms, which will reflect that national liberation movement. In order to defeat U.S. imperialism, a united strategy of the working class, to overthrow imperialism is necessary. Flowing from that strategy is how to further the revolutionary currents of the national liberation movements, which would require some separate strategic and tactical aspects, in rallying the people to the overthrow of imperialism.

Now, as to why I believe the South is the heart of the oppression of the Negro people. This is an historically determined thing, based on slavery, and the evolution of the Jim Crow system, and so forth. The reason why the heart of imperialist oppression is in the South is because that is where the heart of the nation of the Negro people is also, which is historically determined. This does not mean that Negroes from the North are excluded from the national liberation movement. It will embrace all of the northern metropolitan areas—where the majority of the Negro people live. Any question of the self-determination process which will lead to the question "Will the Negro people decide to set up a separate state after the revolution"—is for the Negro people to determine, and it may only be a sector of the Negro people—maybe only five million will want a separate state. I say that a working class socialist state could not deny 5 million Negro people their right to have a separate state. It will have to be a considerable number and it will have to be based on the will of the people.

As for the reason why the South is a semi-colonial area—because the exploitation of the South—both the economic base, and the superstructural conditions of the South—is dominated by finance capital—Northern finance capital—imperialism—just as other colonial areas are dominated by imperialism. All of the characteristics of a semi-colonial area-like retarded industrial development (even though there's been an upsurge in the post-war period) semi-feudal land relations, also the political power is not in the hands of the Southern ruling class as such—it is in the hands of the U.S. ruling class. The Dixiecrats are not the rulers of the South in the real sense but are protecting the interests of the imperialists—even though they have their own interests and there are contradictions. The conditions of the white workers and farmers of the south are affected by this semi-colonial status.

Summing up—One party (Marxist-Leninist) based on internationalism, with the recognition that there is a national liberation movement, there'll be many organizations—we should encourage the further development of the national liberation movement—separate in that sense; there'll be a national liberation front with a working class sector in it (an Marxist-Leninist line) to relate the struggle for socialism to the national liberation struggle. The role of the white proletarian revolutionaries is to build a revolutionary base among white workers, build unity of the working class, and support the national liberation movements, and eventually develop a coalescence of these two revolutionary potentials in the U.S. for the overthrow of imperialism.

JAKE ROSEN:

I think McAdoo is essentially making an organizational political point. But he ties this up with a lot of ideological talk which has nothing to do with it, and is wrong. You (McAdoo) conclude separate parties, presumably because there are separate nations. Then you have to come up with a definition of a nation, and you haven't yet. I don't believe that Negroes in this country are a nation. By McAdoo's definition we are not a nation—we are a collection of tribes. By the various definitions, the only group in this country that is not a nation are the whites. A nation can either be developing or it can be dying out. A nation that is developing is one which is aspiring to statehood. If you use

the word autonomy, that word means the same thing as statehood and so does the word self-determination. The Kurds in Iraq want statehood.

It's a lot easier to form a state than it is to form a nation. In fact you can't form a nation. You could have a group of people that wanted a state who wouldn't necessarily be a nation. For example: The Congo Republic. I don't think you can produce a definition for the Congo that produces a nation out of that. You might have a state. If you're speaking of statehood for the Negro people, then you're speaking of a different country, or you're speaking of some kind of separate political subdivision within the country. Then questions of boundaries are the essence. Then you have to consider the South, which is the only place where black people have a direct relationship to the land in large numbers and have a great concentration. There are a number of northern ghettos, where Negroes are inhabiting a particular section of territory. But what is the developmental status of these places? Is there assimilation going on? Is there greater concentration going on? Are there separate structures being built up? I don't know. You don't make the argument. The argument that there should be a separate party for black people because they're a separate nation doesn't strike me as the right reason. You might agree on the other hand, that within the socialist revolutionary front, you've got to have some structure to protect the interests of Negro people in this country, precisely because this country is founded on slavery, and developed with racism as an organic part of its history, that racism is an organic and psychological part of the white working class, and that the self-protection of the black people requires that the revolutionaries set up a separate protection device which might be a separate party.

For example, in China, you have nine (9) parties—a separate party for artists, for intellectuals, and so on, all of whom are united in the revolutionary front. You could make that argument. I don't know if it would require a separate party—but it would be a lot more valid to examine it from that point of view. I don't see that you can't have a single revolutionary party that has separate detachments in it. Now no one can deny that you need black organizations at this moment to organize black people. We've tried, and I don't say without success, but without the success that black organizers would have had. There is the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee experience in Mississippi which is a different type of struggle than ours. They have less handicaps. White organizers have a degree of success, but they don't have the kind of success that black organizers have, there is a qualitative difference. You have to have a special detachment of black revolutionaries. I think in the short run—in the coming period, you have to expect a rise in the influence of the black petty-bourgeois, precisely because it is in the interest of the capitalist class to produce that rising influence and precisely because there is no black proletarian detachment in the ranks of any of the radical movements. Our chief task, as for example in the south, would be to strengthen the working-class voice—working towards working class leadership which becomes revolutionary leadership.

MILT ROSEN:

When the giants of Marxist thought put forward propositions, like nationhood, what immediately flowed from them were strategic and tactical programs to make the theory come into being. The ability to carry forward these strategies made the theories valid or invalid. The weakness in McAdoo's presentation is that he hasn't presented any ideas of strategy. That doesn't mean that he can't or won't but one of the problems here today is that he hasn't and therefore it is too much of an abstraction at this point for anyone to accept as valid unless they are two hearts beating as one. It is very hard to debate out something without some further development of the idea. In defense of Marxism-Leninism, Marxism-Leninism is based on objective laws of society and nature, and that theory is an objective theory. Either you agree with it or you don't, or you agree with some of it, but not with other parts of it. But if one is a Marxist-Leninist, it is based on a certain objectivity and its practitioners develop and practice the theory based on an objective and scientific development. If they are not able to do that it is not the fault of the theory, it is the weakness of Marxist-Leninists. Either the theory is universal and valid or it isn't; either it can be practised with objectivity or it can't. And if you are saying that Marxism-Leninism can't be practised objectively, based on its objective evaluation of society, then that's what you have to say and fight that through; otherwise the concept of two Marxist-Leninist parties in this particular situation I don't think is valid. More to the point, McAdoo made a very profound observa-

tion—that nationalism is a very strong trend among the Negro people and that it is a petty bourgeois development, and that in some instances it was progressive and that in some instances it was reactionary. Unfortunately he didn't say where its reactionary, what forces today are reactionary and which progressive, although he did say that the main practitioners are reactionary, but he didn't develop who was positive. In any event, I think this is a very important consideration.

In my opinion the Negro question in this country is fundamentally a class question and that in the course of any class struggle various political tendencies develop which are often positive, such as nationalism. Our task is to see what forces are positive, encourage them and win them over to a class point of view. In that sense we have to be very clear what we mean by revolutionary and I want to underline Morty's point of view, because when I talk about revolutionary what I mean is that you want to overthrow the system and have the dictatorship of the proletariat. A bourgeois revolutionist wants to oust one bourgeoisie, usually a foreign one, and supplant it with a native bourgeoisie; that's in most cases. While in many instances that's a good thing, that's not what I'm fighting for; I'm fighting for the dictatorship of the proletariat. When I talk about revolution that what I mean. The reason why many nationalists here are reactionary is that, unlike bourgeois nationalists in other countries, bourgeois nationalists here have no independent program for their own class interests. They are not looking to take away the economic base from the white ruling class, they have no independent program for controlling the economy. They are simply trying to take the rough edges off the racism in this country so that they can help sell it together with the white ruling class, that is the so-called American democracy, as a viable system. They say "Look, if you carry on these vile practices you won't be able to fool the other underdeveloped people. You'll be able to fool them better if you are not so openly racist." The Negro bourgeoisie in the main is not advocating taking away the economic base from the white working class. There are some exceptions but we will have to examine to what degree they are moving in this direction and what we want to make of it because Malcolm X and the Muslims make the point that "Until we have our own black bourgeoisie we won't be free" and I don't know what they mean by that, either because the program they put forward to meet even that demand is unrealistic, because the main position has been that they want the white ruling class to give them territory and land where they can go about setting up their black bourgeoisie.

I personally don't think that's realistic—the white ruling class is never going to give anybody anything, certainly not a lot of land—without revolutionary struggle. So we might draw the conclusion these guys are phonies and though they are edging around something that might have some meaning, they are not really serious, because they have no real program, no serious program to achieve it. The point I'm trying to make here is that I think that in this country we may be able to skip a stage which happens in other countries. In Cuba and maybe Algeria and maybe Ghana and a number of other areas there was this bourgeois nationalist revolution which included many classes. They fought against a colonial oppressor, the United States, and later moved to set up the dictatorship of the proletariat, as in Cuba. But in this country, because the black bourgeoisie has no independent class perspective of its own and has no plans or aspirations, at least as far as one can determine, for the ownership of the means of production, (like taking it away and fighting physically with the ruling class) possibly this particular phase of struggle can be eliminated and what we should concentrate on then is to build workers movements and spend far more time exposing the black bourgeoisie than we have. The Communist Party's position was that the Negro people's movement was an "all-class" movement and we have found that in the main (there are exceptions) the black petty bourgeoisie have been universally a big stumbling block to Negro militancy, from the Muslims to King. The concept of an all class black liberation movement is a wrong concept and I think we should think instead of a working class black liberation front or whatever the proper terminology is. By developing the strength of the workers and exposing the vacillations of and explaining why these guys vacillate, it could be possible to break away certain sections of the black petty bourgeoisie based on independent workers strength, and make some of these guys come over to the side of the workers. I'm not saying that it is in the cards that all the black petty bourgeoisie have to end up in the hands of the white ruling class. I'm only saying that without a powerful workers movement that is where they will end up. Secondly, I think that the question of land, from all that we've heard about the

south, is a fundamental question. There has to be a fight made for land. But how is a fight usually made for land which is owned by somebody else.

The only way I know of is that you have to take it away from them. At this stage, I don't see a successful legislative battle to get the southern oligarchy to cede land territory to the black people. I don't think that's realistic. In the South that is the only way I see doing it. That means developing a set of strategy and tactics to get this land. You got to be stronger than they are and you have to have allies. The subjective concept that militates against alliances and allies is simply a disaster and simply irresponsible. You can get bonafide allies only on the basis of your own strength, but you have to have allies and you have to find the ways of finding allies even when they are hostile. You have to face the question, "Can white people who are today the sharpest chauvinists be won over to common struggle?" I personally think that it is possible, but you have to face it frankly because many Negroes and whites will say that the white workers are no good now, they were no good before and they are never going to be any good. You either have to refute that argument or accept it. If you are going to get allies which ones are you talking about? If the allies aren't going to be the southern oligarchy, and the rich and middle white forces in the south, the only ones left are the workers. In the North we have to have strategy, long range strategy, where the Negro workers begin to control their communities in slow but sure stages. Examples—Rent strikes, Harlem Defense Council—exposing the two party system. This can't happen right away. But when people begin to control their communities and their political affairs it also puts them in the position of having to control the fundamental thing, that is, their economic affairs. But these ghettos physically have no relationship to the means of production. The workers are here and the means of production are someplace else. To have freedom you have to have the means of production. To have freedom and to starve is not exactly the greatest victory.

The logic of the situation is that you are not going to build a new steel plant in the middle of Harlem when you have one sitting in Camden, New Jersey. How are you going to get this thing? You first have to have the revolutionary strategy of taking it away because it doesn't do you much good to control the slums unless you have the means to change the slums. That would compel the Negro workers into alliances with white workers. That means you have to start figuring out now how you are going to unite these forces, at least on a long range basis, and what steps have to be taken to overcome the obstacles to that unity today. I believe this is the difference between a working class revolutionary outlook and others. No nationalist force is expressing these ideas today. We are critical of this. We say if you don't do these things, how can you be free? Suppose a black liberation front came into being, what would we try to influence it to do? If we were to help launch a black liberation front or if a black liberation front were to come into existence even without us—which is probably more likely the case, because we don't have that much influence—we have some, but I don't put too much stock in what we could accomplish on our own. We could help it. We'd have to present a class perspective. That's what Marxism-Leninism is. It is the alliance of farmers and workers to seize the means of production. I don't think the people today are prepared to move for these things but I think we should project these things as viable and as the only systematic way of going about it, and develop a whole number of intermediate strategies such as rent control, taking over houses, defense against police, seeking to take over certain territory, use of the electoral process and so on. Far more fundamental is at all times to hold forward a revolutionary solution to the problems that confront the people. Simply protesting isn't enough. We've all said that picket lines and just the mere act of protest is insufficient, because there's been all forms of direct mass action, and we've all said that these haven't changed anything. We've said, "Look at the integration movement—thousands in jail, thousands on the picket lines, chained to the pillars, stall ins, mow downs and whatever, and while this reflects a great deal of courage and militancy on the part of the participants, we've all said, categorically, black and white, that this ain't getting anybody anyplace. We go so far as to call people who do that phonies—which I don't agree with. Some of the leaders are phonies, but not the individual participants. I think they're good people.

I don't think nationalism is in any shape, manner or form a revolutionary theory, I think it is a lower level of political struggle which is a first step towards revolutionary struggle, unless you are talking about setting up a new dictatorship of a new bourgeoisie, and I don't think that as Marxists-Leninists that is our task. If a black bourgeoisie develops that comes into sharp struggle and has a

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program of its own, with the white bourgeoisie, then we see how to utilize a struggle between bourgeois nationalism and imperialism to further advance the interests of the workers. When Bill refers to the development of nationalism in the Negro community, I think in the main, he's referring to the sentiments of thousands of black workers who are fed up, who are hostile to white bosses, white workers, to anything white, and want to do something about it—not just because they want to do something against white people, but they see white as their enemy, and they want to do something to help themselves, they want to change the conditions in which they live. So we say that's positive, even though within the framework of that there's certain negative characteristics. We help move these people. But what's the job as communists? We're not interested in moving them against white workers—we're interested in moving them against the ruling class, where necessary and if it has to be, yes, to fight against white workers—wherever and whenever that case comes up. The main thing is this nationalism among black workers—which is different than nationalism among black petty bourgeoisie. This is the positive aspect of nationalism, and that's where we want to work, and that's what we want to encourage. It means organization and a million and one things. It means a program for that movement which takes it into a stage-by-stage contradiction with the ruling class, and which, in my opinion takes it closer and closer into alliance with the white workers. The job of the white revolutionaries is to bring the white workers into sharper and sharper contradiction with the ruling class, as best as possible to defeat white chauvinism among white workers, not on a humanistic basis, but in terms of their own self-interest, and to bring them to closer and closer ties and alliances with the black workers. That may very well be what was said before but I don't know that that makes it wrong. I think that one of the things that was essentially wrong before was a mechanical application of Stalin's theory of the national question to this country. You (McAdoo) may think it was mechanical from one aspect and I may think so from another.

MCADOO:—You mean the white liberal mentality in the party?

MILT ROSEN:—Yes, I don't think that has to develop now. I think that the basic relationship of Negro and white in the movement and outside the movement, in terms of who's running whom only develops in the sense of "does the party have a revolutionary policy?" If the party has a revolutionary policy and program then these questions will be reduced to where they properly stand. Therefore, it's the work of the party—black and white—to evaluate whether the party is moving in a revolutionary direction, whether it's really expressing the sentiments of the black workers and the white workers, taking into account that there are great discrepancies in the particular conditions of white workers and black workers. If it's not doing that, then you're going to impose a tailist position on more militant sections of the people, and you're going to come into contradiction with them, and you're going to sell them out. I don't know that the safeguard for that is having two parties. Otherwise, you're only talking about a subjective character to these two parties. That's a subjective thing. The objective thing is to put forward a revolutionary line, because you could have a black Marxist-Leninist party, which could develop a revisionist line. But I do think that in this case where there are strong national feelings among Negro workers, we have to be particularly sensitive to this question, and to see how at this stage of the game not to come into head-on collisions with these sentiments. In other words, white people, and white Marxists-Leninists and the party as a whole have to see how to prevent this. We take steps to meet this in the work in Harlem. On the other hand, I don't think anybody would think it was bad if in 2 years there were ½ a million black and white workers down at City Hall throwing Wagner into the East River.

MCADOO:—My point what we should study what has happened to the application of Marxism-Leninism to this question in the past. On the question of two parties, and on whether the Negro people are a nation. It was not I who said that the Negro people were a nation. I simply stated that if one of Stalin's points were the only thing we had to consider, and if we looked at it in a certain way, then we would have to consider the Negro people a nation—that related to territory. I suggested two parties as one possible method to deal with a particular problem. My thoughts are not fixed. I think the tactical criticism is valid, and I would like for that reason to talk about Harlem—the period from the 18th of July to the 25th of July. In that period we made a lot of mistakes, and we did a lot of things that were correct. We gained a small victory and a big defeat. The main reason was because there was no concept of the relationship of forces there. We had the opportunity to bring multitudes of people close to us—not just in

Harlem, but in Bedford-Stuyvesant, Jamaica, etc. Had we had the program, and skill in organizing. We failed. The unity committee joined with the ruling class and opposed us—but there were people who wanted to line up with us—to come down and demonstrate with us. But did we go over there and debate them? No. We spent too much time condemning without looking at the relationship of forces, and we spent our time with Overton, Lawson, etc. who are some of the most ardent supporters of the ruling class, trying to negotiate.

We didn't organize at that moment—and the idea of organizing at such movement is alien to the left. They accepted it as a riot, and not a rebellion. They helped strip it of any justification and dignity. We didn't get the support we needed and could have gotten even from the East Side Club. Someone said the majority of the Negro people are in the Democratic party. Did they call the rebellion? No. It's not in their interest. So I don't know what significance that point has. Another aspect of the rebellion—admitted by all bourgeois writers is that it wasn't a race riot—but a rebellion against the powers to be—a class struggle. Even they recognize a new quality of struggle, in Harlem, Philadelphia, etc.

From a practical point of view, when we discuss whether the Negroes are a nation, we have to examine situations like this—because it's a moment of truth which let's us know what the relationship of forces are. What did the reactionary nationalists do? Those that weren't on the unity committee—ready to beat the hell out of us—kept their mouths shut, like Malcolm X and his group. We just asked them to read a statement he made over in Africa. They wouldn't do it. Lawson, representative of the Negro wine sellers association, and the little Negro banks—we know what he did. He organized a goon squad to beat the hell out of us. We could have known that before. In the unity committee we could have won some of them over, however, we were inexperienced, and we hadn't done enough practical work. That's why we failed.

FRED: I'm not sure that the defeat was bigger than the victory—but mistakes were certainly made. I tend to think that the overall result was positive. Be that as it may, McAdoo's criticisms are largely valid. Milt's and McAdoo's remarks provide us with a very interesting structure within which to continue this discussion. McAdoo mentioned but didn't stress—our lack of a theoretical position at that point. That was also key. That went hand in hand with the organizational weaknesses. Milt has made an important theoretical assertion. That is, that in the U.S. today, given the industrialized, advanced capitalist nature of the country, that it is possible to skip the separate stage of the completion of the bourgeois democratic revolution for the Negro people. The completion of the bourgeois democratic revolution will come about simultaneously with achievement of the socialist revolution. Not that all struggles for one have to be the same as for the other. The emphasis then becomes a class emphasis in the struggle. In evaluating the relationship of forces, what's your criteria for evaluating them? Milt's position becomes framework for these criteria of evaluation. In other words, what is their relationship to the development of a working class and a class approach within the black liberation movement, their base, their consciousness, their potential, direction, and so on? We may have been doing this without thinking about it in the past. But there are people in this organization who do not think it is possible to skip that stage. I've never seen that proposal written anywhere—or discussed theoretically. I tend to agree with it. I think that discussion is crucial.

UNA MULZAC: I just want to make some remarks on July 25th, etc. I wasn't in the country at that time, but I think that the ruling class in the U.S. received a real jolt in their propaganda when they arrested Bill Epton and the others. This is the way people in other countries looked at it—the ruling class was presented as leaders of the so-called "free world", and yet they prevent people from expressing objections to oppression in their own country. When the news was flashed over the radio, it was presented as "Here are the most courageous people in the United States standing up against the most terrorist state forces in the world". Millions of people around the world saw this as a new stage. As to the question of whether the results were more negative than positive—I certainly think they were more positive.

MCADOO: It wasn't an easy question to decide whether to carry out this march. We knew the police were going to send Lawson's goons after us—and photograph it. We didn't want to allow them to make it seem as though black was fighting black—that the majority of the people in Harlem were against this rebellion—and against us. Another tactical consideration was whether we could win sections of the unity committee over to us. We decided to go ahead with the

march. We had the people to protect us—many who belong to various nationalist organizations. We also decided that though we were going to carry out the march—we were going to instruct the people to allow the police to seize us. This was the march which made headlines all over the world and brought in a different concept to the whole picture. That's a victory. But what have we consolidated out of this victory? What new forces have we brought to us and put into motion? So little that when the attack came, we began losing people. People who had been militant just dropped away. In terms of what we could have had, we suffered a defeat.

SELMA SPARKS: I don't want to be second guessing you, but the defeat came about because there was a lack of a base in the community. You must have something of your own. If we have something of our own it must be based in our community otherwise its not ours. No white led, white run organization can have a base in the black community. When people know you are part of a white group, you don't have the support, you cannot. Randolph said black communists are carriers of water for white communists. Whatever you may think of the man, this happens to be a truth in the minds of most people because it was true in the old CP. They are not for the integrated left organizations. You deal with people where they are now and not where you hope them to be five years from now. Where is the black average person today? Is he in the camp of black-white unity? He is not. Neither is the average white worker. You have to organize accordingly, always knowing that as the level raises you come to the point where you can unite. You can't do it today. You have to begin concentration developing a black revolutionary concept and a black revolutionary grouping, a movement based on the black community with black leadership—a black organization, not a white revolutionary group being kind enough to incorporate in it black revolutionaries. The paternalism in that concept defeated the old left.

MILT ROSEN: Just let me interject—what Selma is arguing is very much to the point although I don't agree with what she says. First of all the old CP (Communist Party) didn't lose whatever base it had among the Negro people because the white leaders in the CP controlled the Negro leaders, although that was the case. It lost its base not because of a subjective factor, but because it abandoned its revolutionary outlook. Sometimes people see what is superficial, though correct, but not what is fundamental. For us it is more important to see what is fundamental and not what is the end result of an incorrect policy. In the second place, there is a great contradiction between what you say and what Bill McAdoo says, because people by the hundreds came to the Progressive Labor Movement, and integrated organization, and he says they came there whether they knew it was integrated or they didn't know it was integrated. Hundreds of people only came there. They went no place else. And the reason they came there was because, as he says, this was the only center which afforded the people some avenue of leadership and some avenue of struggle when all others abandoned it. Where there are leaders, black leaders, and when there is a program to suit the needs of the black people, that is the fundamental consideration. We didn't make the breakthrough precisely because the black cadre that we had in this particular situation reflected not only their own weaknesses of the Marxist-Leninist movement and did not have the strength or the ideological wherewithall to make this breakthrough. I dare say if we would have done all the things everybody wanted us to do we would have made that breakthrough, even though PL is a white organization. And then what would you say? We didn't win the people because we didn't do the work, and we weren't in a position to do the work both physically and ideologically, and that's all of our weaknesses. We didn't lay the groundwork and when it happened we were weak. So I don't see how your arguments hold water except in the sense that Negro workers have national feelings, and this is only one part of a big story.

SELMA SPARKS: Except for one thing—had the group (Bill Epton and group) had their base in the community, had they known that they had to depend on that, they would have done the work necessary to organize the people, because they would not have made a move without having the people there.

MILT ROSEN: For the sake of fact, Bill Epton, because of a whole series of reasons was *the* Negro cadre in Harlem and, he worked no place else but Harlem. He knew this before; that's all he did. All this shows is a whole combination of weaknesses. You're saying that if Bill Epton had done all this work, then this wouldn't have happened. I'm saying he did do all this work, but that's all he could produce. That's not a criticism of him.

LARRY PHELPS: What I'd like to emphasize is Freddy's discussion of criteria to evaluate the work, and the development. Milt said, "we must develop a program which takes into account the stage by stage struggle against the ruling class." You said that struggles around rent strikes, HDC's, etc, could lead from struggles in the community to struggles for the seizure of factories. What I would contrast with the stage-by-stage theory is my idea that we don't need intermediate goals. I'm not saying I'm against such things as a third party or a second labor front at some future time, it is obvious that in almost every Southern Negro community, some kind of community self-defense will develop. There are 15 points for a program for action in the convention bulletin. My emphasis would be that it is not these demands which lead to struggle, but it is the political interpretation of these various issues, which if carried to the mass organizations—people are struggling over these things now. What is crucial is that they don't have any conception of the nature of their struggle. That conception comes from the political analysis you give of that particular issue—the political conditions which you describe which are necessary for the completion of that issue. Now that doesn't presuppose that your political analysis always says that only under socialism will this happen. What is really necessary is not just calling for the seizure of territory, but getting down to the hard work of politicalizing. Trying to explain the political implications of every issue that arises. We were involved in a number of issues in Monroe—the contacts were as good as we could expect in the situation. But there was no consistent attitude toward political agitation. That is the major weakness of our organization. The level of our agitation has been on the level of the consciousness of the people where they are now. From my reading of Challenge, it seems to me that you're telling people in Harlem what they already know. Insofar as systematic elevation, this is not occurring.

MCADOO: Milt is saying that the struggle for national liberation is part of the class struggle. That's fundamental and I agree with him. But we have a problem to deal with—the one Selma posed. On the 25th of July, we got a phone call from a group of people who want to come down and join the march—a white group. They came down to Harlem; they wanted to join the march. Our response was to send them out of Harlem. We said to them, "Don't you have anything in your community you can do for us?" They couldn't understand why we didn't want them. We kicked them out. If we had allowed them to stay the result might have been disastrous, for us in Harlem. Because we have to resolve this problem, does not mean we necessarily need two parties. The fact is that the whole so-called civil rights movement is white-controlled, white run, white liberal, and the money comes from them, and they set up the program, and this has been history. Part of the weakness for not working to break the ban in Harlem, and raise money was because certain of the people in Harlem thought that the money was forthcoming out of a gold cup, downtown. Whatever we say, it is the first task of white revolutionaries to confront reaction in white neighborhoods.

MORTY: I want to start with one point Milt made that I don't agree with. There's two ways of posing the question—that the Negro question is fundamentally a national question, which is ultimately a class question, or is it simply a class question. The question of skipping the stage of an anti-imperialist national revolution (which I think is different from a bourgeois democratic revolution), gives rise to the seeming contradiction between what Selma is saying and what Milt is saying. The difference between a bourgeois democratic revolution and an anti-imperialist national revolution: I think that the concept of the completion of the bourgeois democratic revolution gives rise to the idea that the bourgeoisie of this country is going to complete this revolution. An anti-imperialist nationalist revolution implies a struggle against the bourgeoisie for democratic demands. If we evaluate it as a class question, we will only take national feelings into account tactically. I think that would be an error. It would also lead to errors of a sectarian character toward other class sectors of the Negro people. I view it as a national liberation movement. A movement that goes beyond the working class, involving other classes. The national bourgeoisie will split, a sector going over to the imperialists, another sector being won over under the pressure of a working class leadership. But because it is a national liberation movement, whether we want them to or not—national liberation organizations will emerge among the people. The question is—as Marxists-Leninists, who have the orientation that in order achieve freedom—the means of production have to be seized and the state power has to be smashed, what is the

role of Marxists-Leninists within the liberation front and there is where the class position emerges. Marxists-Leninists don't take a bourgeois nationalist position within the national liberation front. This happens in all national liberation fronts—when the party just takes a bourgeois nationalist position, the national bourgeoisie will lead the revolution. The party has to be the working-class sector which brings forward a class position, taking into account that it is objectively a national liberation movement.

The objective of smashing the imperialists economically and politically can only be achieved by the class as a whole. The party of the class should be one party. I don't see why this lessens the ability of the black comrades to build an independent black revolutionary movements. One of the comrades on the coast, who comes from the Afro-American National Association, tried to build a black liberation front (COBRA), ran into very serious problems. Some nationalists wanted to do things for which there was no political base. Other nationalists just directed fire at the civil rights leadership, without bringing forward an alternative program, because, in effect they didn't want to work among the masses, on a day to day basis. And he was a member of PL. And they made a frontal attack on the point Selma raised—"Are you still black"? They kept asking him "in that white man's organization." Theoretically he felt he was correct, but not having a base, in practice it was a real contradiction—they couldn't resolve it. At this time, I don't think the Marxist-Leninist party will attract masses of black people to it, because of the depth of white chauvinism in this country, and because of the depth of nationalism. I think a black revolutionary front can be developed and should be developed, and we should support it, and advocate it. After all, the fight to establish a revolution in this country and the fight to establish socialism isn't based on conditions today. I think it would be a real strategic defeat to launch a program where the vanguard, the most class conscious forces in the country, say it's impossible to work within the same organization. But I think that this would be capitulation both to white chauvinism and nationalism, even though in an immediate sense, we must take into account the feelings of the people. In the long range sense it reflects a defeatist attitude on this question. We should hold before the people the possibility of unity of revolutionaries—working class revolutionaries.

ALICE JEROME: I think there is some confusion as to the differences between the formation of a mass organization and a Marxist-Leninist party. If you had today a completely black organization in Harlem—with PL's policies—you would still not have a mass membership, because the masses of black workers, just like the masses of white workers, are not yet ready to take a Marxist-Leninist position. We haven't done enough work among them; we haven't had enough struggles among them; we haven't won them over yet. But there is a difference between a mass movement which is possible to have today on a more minimum program than a complete Marxist-Leninist party—which is what we are talking about when we say an anti-imperialist liberation front. If this building of an anti-imperialist national liberation movement is done at the present time, in Harlem and in other Negro communities, by black Marxists, as you gradually recruit people to a Marxist-Leninist position, those people will be just as ready as you are, as they become Marxists-Leninists to work essentially within a working class organization—an organization that is formed on a class basis of Marxist-Leninists, both black and white. I don't think you can skip the stage of working with the national anti-imperialist liberation movement. That is what has to be built, and that is what there is a basis for building, through the struggles that were begun. Often we have made the mistake in the past of confusing our position the feeling we have to take the Marxist-Leninist position that matches the level of consciousness of the people at a given movement. We know that the level of consciousness of the people is not the same as the level of consciousness of the vanguard organization. And we can't trim one to the other. But that doesn't mean that we can just ignore—we have to work at the level of consciousness of the people. We have to work with each group where they are, and we have to carry on struggles where they are, but we still do not have to trim our ultimate and strategic program, as a Marxist-Leninist movement, to the level of consciousness of any group of people.

Certainly, if we tried to trim it to the level of consciousness of the white working class, which is below that of the Negro working class—where would be be? We'd have no basis for a Marxist-Leninist program. I don't think there's any need for assuming that as this Marxist-Leninist organization is able to recruit people who really understand the vanguard position, that the white working class is going to necessarily have hegemony in that organization. If we go by the

present situation, the black working class is much more advanced than the white—it is much more likely that the leadership of a truly Marxist-Leninist organization would be more largely a Negro leadership than a white leadership. If you're realistic about the world today, you begin to see the whites as the minority in the world. For the moment you need a black led, mass anti imperialist liberation organization in Harlem and other black communities of some kind.

MILT ROSEN : And what would its demands be?

ALICE JEROME : It would be very similar to demands in other communities. You would be against police brutality, for jobs, for anti-imperialist Negro leadership in every phase of life—that would be in education, in jobs, in unions. That would be a struggle that would be different than the struggle just for jobs and housing, and against police brutality. It would be for the leadership by the Negro people of their unions, and of these struggles, there would be differences, but I can't spell them out now. There are the two things—and we shouldn't confuse them. There was a time when we could have gone along with and participated in and helped to stimulate a much more wide spread uprising on the lower east side, as part of our expression of support and solidarity to what was going on in Harlem, and we didn't do it, and we very consciously didn't do it. We tried to evaluate our position in the community, as to who would go with us and who wouldn't, and we felt that the main support for the antipolice uprising that was imminent on 3rd street where we were having our street meetings were not the Puerto Rican people of that community—we knew the kids very well, who belong to a couple of gangs on the east side, who came to our meeting with their stickballs bats and everything, really ready for action—we did not go ahead. We said to them, we're going to give as much support as possible to Harlem, but we're not going to make it a provocation. They went along with it. We can analyze this—did we just chicken out? Why didn't we go ahead with it—was it because we were just scared, because we weren't ready to give enough support to Harlem? Were we correct in feeling that we didn't have enough of the community with us, to really carry on something that would have been significant? We felt that we could not carry an action through with any kind of success or value, other than a blood bath.

BILL MCADOO : We didn't have a base in Harlem.

MILT ROSEN : But you didn't start the riot.

ALICE JEROME : If the opportunity comes again—the big question is—how to consolidate whatever gains are made. We also had many people coming through our doors. Why weren't we able to hold on to more of this mass interest? You (McAdoo) said we didn't seize hold of these people. Well, you can't seize hold of them physically—the problem is how you take it from this stage to the consolidated stage, where the people are ready to go ahead with the day to day work. There's no magic answer—but there is the thing Larry said—of working to raise the political level while we're fighting on the immediate issues.

MIKE CRENOVICH : I would like to put forward the need of presenting, together with the new concepts and ideas put forth, some of the analysis that brings those conclusions. For example—on the question of skipping the bourgeois democratic stage—we have to establish what is the position of the Negro people in relation to imperialism. I would suppose that it has certain characteristics that would make skipping that stage valid. The new countries of Africa and Asia are going through that process, of trying to achieve a bourgeois democratic revolution before a socialist revolution. On the other hand, in Latin America, the Communist Parties have put forth for a long time, that the bourgeois democratic revolutions were never completed, and therefore the first task was completing it. That seems to be a fallacy and has been proven wrong.

There cannot be any meaningful change unless it goes in the direction of a socialist revolution—because of Cuba and because of the objective conditions in all countries. Waiting to complete a bourgeois democratic revolution in Latin America before going to a socialist stage is incorrect, and leads to a misdirecting of the struggle, and defeat, instead of achieving victory. As important as the rebellion in Harlem was, we say that it's a new stage, but we haven't analyzed it—the character it had, why it had that character, why it was repeated in other cities, how it was repeated. On the point Epton raises about Negroes in the Democratic party—it would be important to find out how many people actually vote, how many don't. It's possible that the people who never vote would respond to a political party of a different nature. In relation to the struggle in the south—how many people are involved in it; who are they; does the character

of their involvement in different instances reveal something as to their mood as to engaging in a struggle? Unless we have some analysis of the subjective factors, it is difficult to come to some conclusion on the other things we've been discussing.

MILT ROSEN: I want to make a little sharper the position I took, and make it a little more way out. First of all, there's never been a national proletarian revolution, in the sense that we speak of bourgeois national revolutions. There never was, there never will be. There are bourgeois national revolutions in which the native bourgeoisie emerges, challenges the outside bourgeois, and in order to win the workers to their side, says that when we get power, we're going to pay you more—we're going to give you a little bit bigger piece of the pie than the other guys did, and therefore, those workers support the native bourgeois. I don't think we have a national liberation movement in the U.S. today—although I've used the term as much as anybody else. I think it's just a mimicking of a term that's developed in the international movement, that seems on the surface appropos to the situation here. We used it because we don't have a clear position of our own and it sounds nice. Superficially you can make a case for it, but I don't believe it's what exists here at all. My own feeling is that what exists here is that the Negro question is fundamentally a class struggle, and is being motored in many respects by many national considerations.

EPTON: Do you take class as opposed to national?

ROSEN: No, not as opposed, I think that the class question is motored by the national question. We have a very peculiar logic in our argument. For example, we've said, many time that the Negro petty bourgeoisie has been the main force for the integration movement in the south, and we know that the whites have been able to unite with that movement, the ruling class has been able to identify with it (not unite, but identify), and we've said time and time again, that in the main, it has not been able to win the majority of the workers, or poor farmers to their movement although there is sympathy. Because, sure, they're not against the Negro petty bourgeoisie winning the right to eat at a restaurant, and they themselves, if they had the money, wouldn't mind eating at that restaurant, and besides which there is the whole question of degradation, and that concerns every Negro. But obviously some Negroes are prepared to fight for it far harder than others—especially the petty-bourgeoisie. If that's the case—(and we've said this about the North as well)—whether its social integration or whatever—we've proven to ourselves that it isn't a question of integration, although any Negro who want to send his kid to an integrated school, should have the right, but we've always said that isn't the main desire of the mass of Negro workers. If these aren't the main desires—what are they? My opinion is that the main thing that concerns the Negro workers in the U.S. today is jobs. That's the #1 issue.

When I was in Birmingham—we evaluated that situation from other militants—like for example—Len Holt an article in the Guardian—he said very clearly—the main issue among the masses is jobs, although the masses supported the drive for limited integration and compelled, compelled, remember? the integration leadership to insert the question of jobs. When the demonstrations first started there it wasn't around the question of jobs. That question came into the demands later on, when the mass of the Negroes said "Look, what are we breaking our ass for? We don't care—we don't care—we have no work here." So Martin Luther King and the committee said they'd negotiate with the businessmen downtown, and we'll try to get you some jobs. And we know that they sold out that issue. Now we all agree on one thing it seems to me—some people want two parties—but we all say we should have a black movement—based on black working class strength. Well, that would be the demands of that movement? The demands wouldn't be "national liberation." That's baloney. They want jobs, better housing, beter schools, and yes, a lot of people would identify with supporting national liberation movements in other countries, because they don't want to go and fight in the Congo, etc. That's not national liberation. Every one of these demands are either of an international class character reflecting proletarian internationalism, or reflect their own class demands. So how do you make that into a national liberation movement? It's nothing of the kind. I'll tell you another thing—when Castro came to Harlem—a white man—he put those phony nationalist leaders off the corner. Tens of thousands of Negroes came and stood out in front of the Hotel Theresa, because here was a guy who was the head of a revolutionary movement.

MCADOO: You're wrong. He was a black man. Just like there are 650 million blacks in China.

MILT ROSEN: They viewed him as one of their own, because here was a guy who led his people and defeated the very same bosses they're against, and they hailed him on that basis—not because he was a white man. Otherwise, why were they responding to him?

MCADOO: I'll tell you, because he's a black man in Harlem.

ROSEN: That may be—so by that same logic—I'll be a black man in Harlem. That's exactly the point I'm making. Because the two basic issues that emerge are internationalism with China, with Cuba, with Africa, with Latin America and with the Soviet Union, if she pursued a class program. And the main demands of the people today are for class questions, and for class demands and that's why I say it's fundamentally a class question. Yes, if you had a black bourgeoisie—that had a conference and said "We are going to start a movement to expropriate the land and industry in the black belt in the south. And when we take it over, we're going to hire black workers, pay them higher wages than they get now, and if need be, we're going to fight for this, and we call upon all black workers to support this, I say yeah, that's a national liberation movement—That a black bourgeoisie, with a program, it's drawing the workers into alliance with them, on the basis of concessions to these workers, and the enemy is the white ruling class, and the white workers if they support the white ruling class. You do not have that in this country, and that's why this stage is going to be skipped, whether we like it or not. Because, if you go to the Negro masses today with some idea of nation, national liberation movement, I don't think you're going to get far. Yes, you explain what racism is—how it's used to exploit people, etc. But the demands are going to come out the same. Every demand that was written in Harlem—that was successful—that won the support of the black people was essentially class demands (and they're the ones you wrote—Epton—and you McAdoo—and you, and you, or that any one of us would have written.) And that's the proof. Your policy has to coincide with the strategy and tactics. Lenin and Stalin applied their analysis of the national question to the Soviet Union—and they developed specific strategy and tactics in terms of the national minorities that exist in the Soviet Union.

FRED: I think this is the key point—for or against it. Morty, your remarks appearing to disagree at least in part with this were not all all convincing. You stated the difference between a bourgeois democratic revolution and an anti-imperialist nationalist revolution—I don't know what it is. If a national revolution is different from a socialist revolution, then that's a key difference. I don't see this other difference. The specific point that the Negro freedom struggle is something that involves other classes, well that doesn't negate the point that Milt is making. Every socialist revolution involves other classes, has involved other classes and has to involve other classes. Unless you're saying it involves the entire other class. Unless you're making an estimate of the Negro petty bourgeoisie that the entire Negro petty bourgeoisie is going to be involved in this. I think the facts show that that's not the case. Large sections of the Negro petty bourgeoisie are playing an anti-revolutionary role. That doesn't mean entirely—section of it will be involved in this—certainly. But that doesn't negate the point that it is basically a class revolution, and that this stage will be skipped. All I'm saying is that haven't proved the point—I don't say that the point is settled. That's critical—that means that really the development of organizations based on a working class position, taking into account the national atmosphere that exists—that they be black organizations. It means the development particularly—in addition to that—of socialist agitation by black leaders in the black community, and there can be a class group which is not a socialist group. It means an evaluation of other forces in the community based on this criterion. It is a new framework within which to put this. There are a number of question that have to be raised, although my tendency is to agree with it. I don't think that this means that there are no national demands to be included. You Mort? criticized this because it left the national things to tactics. That (taking Milt's position) doesn't mean that one abandons all these tactics sensitivity to national feelings. This brings up the question that Larry raised—two things: one that we need more socialist agitation, which I think is valid; but at the same time he was saying there should be no intermediary goals, short of socialism. That means when you were in that situation in Harlem, when nobody else was doing anything, you should have said "socialism is the answer"—. Unless you have an intermediary goal, you have to—

LARRY: You don't have to have any goal. You could explain what the hell is happening. **FRED:** That's my point. Larry is saying, you don't have to have any goal, you just have to explain what is happening. I disagree with that. As far as the question of two parties is concerned, I agree with Bill McAdoo—in that the question can't be simply brushed aside with the sense that "well, if you're truly a Marxist-Leninist party, everybody will be equal". That true theoretically. Reality is that you're a Marxist-Leninist party within the atmosphere of a decadent white supremacist, racist society, which affects us all. Even within that party there are tendencies. Just as there are nationalist tendencies which may be unhealthy to some extent among black Marxists-Leninists, there are certainly chauvanist tendencies which are unhealthy among white Marxists-Leninists. It doesn't take much for the word to get around. These tendencies play off on each other within a movement. I don't agree with Selma's conclusion that therefore, you need two parties, because I don't think its been demonstrated. But I think we should not confuse what is a healthy nation among the masses of people with what should be a correct Marxist-Leninist position. We should not say that something is our own because it is black, in the sense that we really think it is our own.

EDDIE LEMANSKY: The way in which this issue of the Negro question being a class question has been raised—it's been raised with the proviso that "of course we have to take account of the feelings of nationalism of the Negro people" which I think is true, but what hasn't been raised is the fact that while Negroes workers are members of the same class as white workers, there are objective differences in their interests and needs, not just differences of feeling, or differences of identity. Just as there are real differences, for example, between the needs of Cuban workers and American workers. The American ruling class in fact, plays on that, by speaking to white workers and saying "These Negroes are coming to take your jobs." They can say that in the circumstance of a lack of enough jobs for everyone. Now, if you're going to make sure that our party maintains a real fight for the interests of the Negro people, we have to be very clear that there are going to be circumstances in which, because of the super-exploitation of Negroes, they're going to be put in the position where they're going to have to fight with white workers. We have to be certain that we support those demands. Too many times the issue of a common class has been raised as a method of holding Negroes back. This is precisely the feeling that Selma was speaking to, and Bill. Unless we're clear where we are on these things—then the only guarantee will become separate organizations. If we're serious about our revolutionary perspective, then we're going to be serious on those issues where there very well might be a conflict between white and black workers. **UNA:** You (Milt) made the point that there is no such thing as a national liberation movement. Well, what do you call this very strong anti-white sentiment in the Negro community? Is this not the thing that we've been throwing around as the healthy national liberation feeling?

MILT: I don't think that's a national liberation movement. Take for example—the rebellions all over the country. Generally what we've said is that the people were rebelling against their conditions. The object of their rebellion was in the immediate sense the white police, who represented the white bosses, and anybody who was white. I also say that the national feeling—of common oppression, etc.—which is propelling the black workers—because those were black workers in the main, those weren't the black petty bourgeoisie out in the street. This is what's propelling them towards fighting for very specific demands. So therefore, this nationalism is good because it helps and spurs the people to fight for specific programmatic reforms, which include of course the whole question of certain democratic freedoms. This doesn't necessarily mean that it's a national liberation movement. I don't want to argue the semantics of it though. It has many different features from what we've called national liberation movements in the past.

MCADOO: That doesn't mean it shouldn't exist.

MILT: Absolutely, **MCADOO:** Or that it should not exist **MILT:** It's going to exist. We want it, we encourage it, we build organizations on it. But the main demands of this movement are going to be around class questions.

EPTON: Are you saying that the demands and the work going on, are class demands and the actions are around class demands, but it's within the framework of a national movement.

MILT: No. I would say, that's based on the radical oppression of the Negro people by the white ruling class. But this is not a national liberation movement

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in the sense that we have spoken of one. It is not a movement for the black bourgeoisie to win economic control of sections of the country which is what a national liberation movement has historically been.

EPTON: The class question in relationship to the national question. How do you put the two together.

MILT: I put the two together because they— **EPTON:** Are they together?

MILT: Yes, particularly related, but the main thing that comes out of it is a development of the class status of the people, precisely because they're workers. It isn't the black bourgeoisie out in the streets fighting for their demands. It's black workers fighting for their demands as black workers. They're not fighting for the right of a black boss to open up a steel mill. They're not fighting for the right of black bosses even to get a piece of the steel mill. Now, based on the strength that black workers can develop, and the development of a real movement, they will compel sections of the black petty bourgeoisie to come to their side, just as in other revolutions—the workers have been able to compel (by their own strength) the intelligencia, the petty bourgeoisie (sections of), etc. to come to their side. For example—the Chinese say quite categorically that the Chinese petty bourgeoisie financed the Chinese revolution—but the Chinese petty bourgeoisie wouldn't have if the peasants and the working class weren't moving in a revolutionary direction.

MORTY: In your opinion, a national liberation movement can only be led by the bourgeoisie?

MILT: In the main, that's right.

MORTY: Well, who led the Cuban revolution? Didn't the working class play a decisive role.

CHORUS: No, no.

FRED: A decisive role—but that doesn't mean that they lead it.